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Review Article

LIFESTYLE MODIFICATION OF OFFICIAL WORKERS W.S.R. TO CORPORATE WORKERS

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ABSTRACT

The people working in big private companies may be considered as corporate workers. Due to changed lifestyle of the official workers, they commonly face psychological stress. This stress is mainly caused by the internal pressure to achieve success in goals. Stress may be considered as a major reason in lowering the body's own resistance power and as a result may develop physical and mental ailments. Majority of official workers are prone to lifestyle disorders due to poor eating habits, load of work, physical inactivity and wrong body postures. Ayurveda can do very much in this field. In Ayurveda, where stress is known as *Sahasa*, Acharya Charak has advised to avoid *Sahasa* as it adversely affects the body. In Ayurveda ancient Acharyas has mentioned some Ayurvedic preparations and daily lifestyle regimen which can be helpful in lifestyle modification of corporate workers. Among these, *Abhyanga*, yoga exercises and *Pranayam* play a very important role. Therapeutically, *Nasya Karma*, and *Shirodhara* are helpful in reducing the symptoms of lifestyle disorders. Some Ayurvedic preparations has been described by the ancient Acharyas like *Shankhapushpi*, *Bramhi*, *Jatamansi*, *Sarasawatarishta*, *Ashwagandha*. This article is an attempt to analyze the lifestyle modifications for corporate workers with the help of Ayurveda, meditation, yoga, physical exercises and balanced diet together play an important role in rejuvenating the health of an individual on physical, mental and emotional level with a combination of benefits like *Panchkarma* therapy, herbal medicines, good *Dinacharya* and nutritious diet.

KEYWORDS: Ayurveda, *Dinacharya*, lifestyle disorders, *Panchkarma*, *Pranayam*, Stress, *Sahasa*.

INTRODUCTION

In these modern times, the lives of the people working in corporate world are more like machines due to high stress level, demanding schedule i.e. long working hours and poor eating habits. The people working in big private companies may be considered as corporate workers. The types of people that are likely to fall into this category might be, CEO's, bankers, investors, and brokers. All these workers whether working as bankers, investors or corporate employees, all are running in their life in order to gain promotions, salary increment etc. But this is hampering their lifestyle leading to lifestyle disorders. Stress may be considered as a major reason in lowering the body's own resistance power and as a result may develop physical and mental ailments.

Disease is a state of discomfort in which the normal functioning of the body is affected. Lifestyle diseases are symptomatic of everything that is wrong with today's lifestyle. Diseases that are linked with lifestyle choices are known as lifestyle disorders. A lifestyle is the pattern of living that we follow – how

we work, what and when we eat, how and when we sleep.

In Ayurveda, *Tridosh* i.e. *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha* are three important pillars of the human body. Any imbalance in three *Doshas* may lead to stress. In Ayurveda, where stress is known as *Sahasa*, Acharya Charak has advised to avoid *Sahasa* as it adversely affects the body.^[1] *Sahasa* causes *Ojakshaya* which may be responsible for the aetiology of several diseases.^[2] Hence *Sahasa* should be avoided as far as possible and body should be protected by taking care of three sub-pillars of Ayurveda i.e. *Traya upastambha* – *Aahar* (Diet), *Nidra* (Sleep) and *Brahmacharya* (celibacy).

Ayurveda is a life science which provides ways to prevent and manage lifestyle diseases. In the management of lifestyle disorders, *Ayurveda* offers various procedures like *Panchkarma*, *Rasayan* therapies. For maintaining psychological lifestyle, *Sadvritta* and *Aachara Rasayan* play an important role.

Causes of Stress in workers

In today's era, due to changed lifestyle of the official workers, they commonly face psychological stress. It is also called achievement oriented stress which is mostly suffered by younger generation. This stress is mainly caused by the internal pressure to achieve success in goals. It often leads to alcoholism, lack of sleep, and irregular eating habits with diet rich in calories and fat. All this leads to vitiation of both *Vata* and *Kapha doshas*. Eating unhealthy diet, smoking, drinking, may also lead to physical strain. Health Problems related to corporate workers due to stress-

Majority of official workers are prone to lifestyle disorders due to poor eating habits, load of work, physical inactivity, and wrong body postures. The major health problems suffered by official workers are [3]:

- Eye inflammation- It occurs due to extended period of looking at a screen, result in eye strain.
- Stomach ache- Sitting down after taking meal causes abdominal content to compress results in slowing the digestion.
- Obesity
- Knee pain
- Hands pain- Due to prolonged repetitive small hand movements such as those involved in computer use.
- Headache - Mostly tension headache are cervicogenic i.e. from neck and may radiate to neck.
- Lower back pain - Sitting for long hours at a fixed position may push pressure on the spine which may result in backache.
- Wrong seat at the workplace- Sitting continuously in front of the keyboard may result in developing permanently rounded upper back which can cause upper back and neck pain.

Management of Stress

Prevention is better than cure, is the first principle of Ayurveda to maintain the health. There are two approaches to prevent the stress-

1. To avoid factors inducing stress and vitiating *Doshas*.
2. To increase the coping capacity of the body.

Avoiding stress inducing factors is the most ideal approach towards the stress management but it is not the appropriate strategy because stress is an inevitable companion of success. The coping capacity of the body can be increases by lifestyle modifications, dietary interventions and drugs treatment. All these are well organized under *Rasayan* therapy.

Achara Rasayana, includes non violence, balanced use of sense organs is advised. It helps in reducing psychological stress.

Lifestyle Modification

This can be divided in three headings

1. Ideal Daily Activities
2. Weekend Activities
3. Relaxation Period

Ideal Daily Activities

- Stick to a regular sleep schedule – A sound sleep of at least eight hours is very essential to keep body fit and proper functioning of the brain.^[4]
- Drink water early in the morning so that it can help in eliminating toxins from the body and stimulate peristalsis. Also it helps in preventing dehydration.
- *Abhyanga* – Massaging the body with lukewarm sesame seed oil daily, especially your sole, feet and ears. Sesame oil contains lenoleic acid which acts as a good anti inflammatory agent. On the other hand, lukewarm oil stimulates *Swedavaha Srotas*, dilates blood vessels and increasing circulation, thus relieving pain, stiffness and stress.^[5]
- Exercise and *Yoga* – There are some yoga postures like *Ustrasana*, *Bhujangasana*, *Dhanurasana*, which can be helpful in reducing lower back pain and stiffness of the body caused due to hectic schedule of office. Breathing exercises like *Anuloma – Viloma*, *Pranayama* helps in reducing cortisol and adrenalin hormones (stress hormones). Also yoga exercise increases endorphins which act as internal painkiller.^[6]
- A daily diet intake should be at proper timing and with proper nutritional balance. Try to avoid oily and spicy meal in your routine. Increase green vegetables, fruits and salads in your meal.
- Avoid excess of tea or coffee during office hours. As caffeine can exaggerate sympathetic adrenal –medullary responses, makes blood pressure rise and spikes levels of adrenalin, both are associated with self reported stress.^[7]
- Avoid continuous work at your computer screen and try to take a break away from screen every hour.
- Follow 20/20 rule to avoid the symptoms of eye strain.
- 20/20 rule: After every 20 minutes, you should take a break for at least 20 seconds and look at objects that are 20 feet away from you.^[8]

- Practice stretching exercises during office hours like stretching your arms overhead and interlock your fingers.

Weekend Activities

- Take a leave from your work every year for at least two weeks.
- Schedule micro adventures with your family, it will significantly improve your mood throughout the week.
- Indulging in your hobbies, like music, reading, painting etc., great way to escape stress and to open your mind to new ways of thinking.

Relaxation Period

- Should go through *Panchkarma* detoxification programme (*Ritushodhan*), once in a year.
- A relaxation period of 7-14 days is provided by *Ayurvedic Dhaams*.
- These *Ayurvedic Dhaams* contain some relaxing procedures including Ayurvedic therapies like *Shirodhara*, *Shiroabhyanga*, *Basti* etc. [9]
- Another Ayurvedic therapy i.e. *Nasya* is very much beneficial in reducing the stress and enhances mental clarity.

Nasya Karma - Ayurvedic acharyas has mentioned *Nasya Karma* as one of the *Pachakarma* in lowering the stress level. *Nasya* has been considered by *Acharyas* as the gateway to *Shira* (head). It cleanses and opens the channels of the head and also improves oxygenation i.e. the flow of *Prana vayu* which is having a direct and beneficial effect on the brain functioning. Also *Nasya* reaches *Shrungataka Marma* (cavernous sinus) through which it reaches ear, nose, eye and head vessels and regulate their physiological functions. It helps in *Indriya Prasadan* (clarity of senses) which leads to clarity of mind. [10]

Shirodhara - *Acharya Vagbhata* has mentioned *Shirodhara* as a type of *Murdha Tail* procedure which means continuous pouring of lukewarm oil in a stream over the forehead for 30 to 45 minutes. The oil saturates the forehead and scalp and penetrates into the nervous system. Due to this gentle pressure of oil body, mind and nervous system experiences a deep state of rest. It reduces depression and rejuvenates central nervous system.

Akshitarpana - In Ayurveda, *Acharya Sushruta* has mentioned *Akshitarpana* or *Netratarpana* as one of the rejuvenating procedure for our eyes. It is an Ayurvedic procedure in which a medicated *Ghee* is retained over the eyes for a specific duration of time. [10] As above mentioned, official workers are prone for eye problems like dry eye, excessive lacrimation, burning sensation in the eyes, blurred vision etc. due to continuous exposure to computer. *Akshitarpana* can help to treat this condition and restore the vision.

It can be helpful in improving the vision clarity and relieve the symptoms of computer vision syndrome.

Medicinal Preparations

Ayurveda not only emphasize on reducing the stress level but also focus on the prevention from the lifestyle diseases which can be caused due to the hectic lifestyle of workers. Some Ayurvedic preparations have been described by the ancient *Acharyas* like *Shankhapushpi*, *Bramhi*, *Jatamansi*, *Sarasawatarishta*, *Ashwagandha*.

- *Shankhapushpi* is believed to have cooling and calming effect on the brain which can be very much beneficial for the workers suffering from insomnia, anxiety and gives sound sleep.
- *Bramhi* is another brain tonic which relieve mental stress, and strain.
- *Jatamansi* proves good for nervous system and helps to cure mental diseases like insomnia, memory loss, hysteria. [11]

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda as a holistic science describes the *Swastha Purush* (positive health) as a balance of body and mind. In other words, we can say, a healthy individual is the one who is physically as well as mentally healthy. Thus, Ayurveda, meditation, yoga, physical exercises and balanced diet together play an important role in rejuvenating the health of an individual on physical, mental and emotional level with a combination of benefits like *Panchkarma* therapy, herbal medicines, good *Dinacharya* and nutritious diet.

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